



**State of Connecticut**  
**HOUSE REPUBLICAN OFFICE**  
STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

**Testimony in Opposition to  
Senate Joint Resolution Number 29 and  
House Joint Resolution Number 1  
Government Administration and Elections Committee  
February 22, 2023**

Chairs Senator Flexer and, Representative Blumenthal, Ranking Members Senator Sampson and Representative Mastrofrancesco, and distinguished members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to **Senate Joint Resolution 29: A Resolution Approving an Amendment to the State Constitution to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting** and **House Joint Resolution 1: A Resolution Approving a State Constitutional Amendment to Allow No-Excuse Absentee Voting**.

The committee has before it two identical proposals. These proposals are the second round of the constitutional amendment to allow voting by absentee ballot without restriction, (H.J. 58 from 2021.) Under our current restrictions, individuals may only vote via absentee ballot if: (1) they are absent from the town in which they reside during all hours of voting; (2) they are ill or have a physical disability; (3) the tenets of their religion forbid secular activity on the day of the primary, election, or referendum; (4) they are in active service in the U.S. Armed Forces; or (5) they are primary, election, or referendum officials outside of their voting district, and their duties will keep them away during all hours of voting. This proposal, if approved by the voters, would eliminate these current restrictions and give individuals the ability to vote by absentee ballot by right.

The House Republican Caucus believes that Senator Looney said it best in a 2019 speech on the Senate Floor discussing a proposed constitutional amendment permitting early voting:

"a provision that many regarded as problematic was removed... and that is opening the process potentially to universalization of absentee balloting. And I think that was -- that is legitimately controversial. Because in reality we never really know for sure who is casting an absentee ballot ... And so that is an issue... obviously the number of absentee ballot cases of fraud that we've had over the years well documents the flaws in that system."

Senator Looney is correct; this is a controversial topic. The state should proceed cautiously when it considers expanding the opportunity for electors to vote by mail. Given the simultaneous discussion on early voting happening elsewhere in this committee, we are enacting significant changes to our election laws in a short period of time without considering the necessity for provisions safeguarding the integrity of our elections.

Given these substantial changes, we also agree with Governor Lamont who stated in a 2019 Hartford Courant article, "If there's controversy in and around absentee ballots, we better get this right... We better give people confidence." If electors do not believe that our election laws are protecting our elections from undue influence and bad actors, then removing the current restrictions for voting by mail will only further undermine confidence in our elections.

We appreciate the Government Administration and Elections Committee's consideration of our perspective and we look forward to continued discussions on this issue.